They ask you about intoxicants and games of chance. Say: In both of them there is a great sin. *(Surah Baqarah:219)*

Is Alcohol Humanity's Greatest Enemy?

Author: **Amanullah Ismail**

Book Review By

Mufti Muhammad Naim

Grand Mufti Jamia Binoria Al Alamia

Translated by

Hammad Muslim Surma

Published by

Binhoor Education & Welfare Trust

D23–B, S.I.T.E. Area, Karachi.

CONTENTS

1: BOOK REVIEW.....3

2: THE SUPERIORITY OF THE QURAN OVER MAN'S BRAIN 8

3: ALCOHOL IS HARAM 10

(I) THE FIRST VERSE..... 12

(II) THE SECOND VERSE 15

(III) THE FINAL VERSE..... 17

4: IRRATIONAL MISUNDERSTANDING .. 19

5: THE SAYINGS OF PROPHET MUHAMMAD (ﷺ).....21

6: THE CONDEMNATION OF ALCOHOL BY WESTERN BRAINS 24

7: HEALTH EFFECTS..... 27

BOOK REVIEW

In the Pre Islamic era, Alcoholism was as prevalent as other barbaric traditions were in the Arab world. The Arabs had become addicted to liquor to such an extent that they could merely stay a few hours without it. The Arabs were in need of a savior and so Allah sent down Islam to enlighten not only the Arabian Peninsula but also the rest of the world.

Islam with its light tamed this Arabian society by abolishing all the barbaric customs and by teaching them wisdom. Islam also liberated the Arabs and the world from the curse of Alcohol. It wasn't an easy task for the early Muslims as habits die hard. There is a famous saying in Arabic:-

فطام العادة اشد من فطام الرضاعة

It is more difficult for an adult to quit a lifelong addiction than it is for

a child to stop (quit) suckling.

Islam was familiar with this human nature and so instead of enforcing the ban instantly, it first cajoled the Muslims into quitting alcohol and then criminalised it's consumption, production, transportation and sale. In order to convince the early muslims, Islam adopted the following sequence:-

1– First, Allah informed them (early Muslims) about the spiritual effect of drinking in Surah Al Bakarah, verse number 219, in the following words:-

قُلْ فِيْهِمَآ اِثْمٌ كَبِيْرٌ وَّ مَنَافِعُ لِلنَّاسِ ۫ وَ اِثْمُهُمَآ اَكْبَرُ مِنْ نَّفْعِهِمَا ؕ (2:219)

Say (Oh Prophet Muhammad ﷺ) in both of them there is a great sin and means of profit for men, and their sin is greater than their profit.

2– Then, He warned them about the Satan's trap in Surah Al Maeda, verse number 90.

رِجْسٌ مِّنْ عَمَلِ الشَّيْطٰنِ(5:90)

Uncleanness, the Satan's work.

EXPLANATION: Allah has called alcohol an uncleanliness which is used by Satan.

3– Then in Surah Maeda, verse number 91, Allah informed them about how alcohol influences their daily life.

اِنَّمَا يُرِيْدُ الشَّيْطٰنُ اَنْ يُّوْقِعَ بَيْنَكُمُ الْعَدَاوَةَ وَالْبَغْضَاءَ (5:91)

The Satan only desires to cause enmity and hatred to spring in your midst by means of intoxicants and games of chance.

4– Furthermore, in Surah Maeda, verse number 91, Allah informed them about how alcohol harms their spirituality in the following words:-

وَيَصُدَّكُمْ عَنْ ذِكْرِ اللّٰهِ وَعَنِ الصَّلٰوةِ (5:91)

And to keep you off from the remembrance of Allah and from prayer.

5– Finally in the same verse, verse number 91 of Surah Al Maeda, Allah questioned them that even after knowing about all these evils of alcohol will they not leave it? In the following words:-

فَهَلْ اَنْتُمْ مُّنْتَهُوْنَ (5:91)

Will you then desist (abstain)?

Note: This question was not only for the early Muslims but it is also for the entire Muslim Ummah.

These were only the spiritual and the mundane effects of alcohol in the light of the Quran. It even affects man's health. The severity of these effects can solely force a wise man to quit alcohol. It hinders the stomach in digesting food. As a result, one suffers through loss of appetite and gains weight. In short, **alcohol affects man's energy levels.** A renowned

German doctor has been quoted to have said that the body of a 40 year old alcoholic is akin to that of a 70 year old man.

Alcohol doesn't only affect one's energy levels, but even affects one's lungs, nervous system and throat. As a result, one's voice becomes heavy or jerky and one might even suffer through asthmatic cough.

Through this book, Mr. Amanullah Ismail has tried to warn the Muslim Ummah about the effects of alcoholism (the mother of all evil) on one's mundane issues and spirituality in the light of the Quran and Hadith. He has played a vital role of **ENJOINING GOOD & FORBIDDING EVIL** (امر بالمعروف والنهی عن المنکر). May Allah bless him and make this book a means of guidance (HIDAYAH) for the Muslim Ummah.

MUFTI MUHAMMAD NAIM
Eminent Scholar and Grand
Mufti of Jamia Binoria Al Alamia.
S.I.T.E. Area, Karachi.

THE SUPERIORITY OF THE QURAN OVER MAN'S BRAIN

Islam is not just confined to spirituality but extends over the entire spectrum of life, showing us how to conduct all human activities in a sound and wholesome manner to attain supreme success in both the worlds. We can find instructions regarding all aspects of life in the Quran and the Prophetic tradition (Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ)'s life and sayings). Islam provides man with the solution to all sorts of problems no matter how perplexing they may be. Islam has ushered man to a successful life by laying down a strong foundation of principles for him to differentiate between

good and evil and by declaring every act or thing innocuous to man halal while every act thing injurious to man haram. This makes Islam, the revealed religion from Allah, comprehensive and proficient.

There is no chance of Islam being incomplete or erroneous as it is revealed by Allah. A creator knows his creation better than anyone. Likewise no one will have better knowledge than Allah does of the universe as He is its creato r. We can only know the secrets of the universe if Allah wills so. This is repeated many times in the Quran. Allah has revealed the Quran to assist mankind in making a correct judgment as our brain fails to adjudicate due to inadequate informatio n. That's why before declaring an act or thing halal or haram , it is compulsory for man to refer the Qura n. If Allah wouldn't have blessed us with the Quran, we would have had spread havoc on

Earth.

Allah says is Surah Rome ayah 41

ظَهَرَ الْفَسَادُ فِي الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ أَيْدِي النَّاسِ (30:41)

Corruption has appeared in the land and the sea on account of what the hands of men have wrought.

ALCOHOL IS HARAM

We are aware of all these facts, yet we do not follow the Quran. Sadly, the level of arrogance isn't just confined to not following the Quran, but some of our brothers even deny some of the acts or thing being declared haram in the Quran. Alcoholism is one the acts which people argue being haram. In this book I will prove alcohol haram in the light of the Quran and the sayings of Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ).

In the pre-islamic times, barbarism ruled

the Arabian Peninsula; primarily due to chronic alcoholism. Allah has used the word "KHAMR", which means to cover or to conceal, for Alcohol in the Quran as it clouds or obscures the intellect that hinders decision making and impairs the sense of judgment. As a result, people start acting violently and promiscuously. This promotes sexual harassment in the society. Alcohol is to Nafs like oxygen is to fire. Nafs denotes man's carnal desires. Not all carnal desires can be termed evil. Only the desires that come in conflict with the Islamic ideology, fornication for instance, can be termed evil. It is these evil carnal desires which alcohol enflames. How could a religion like Islam tolerate something that promotes unchastity in the society? So, Islam prohibited the consumption, transportation, production and trading of alcohol. Islam was familiar with the fact that it would be difficult for the early muslim to quit alcohol as habits die hard and so

instead of enforcing the ban instantly, Islam first cajoled the early Muslims to quit alcohol and then made it haram to consume, produce, transport and sell. Islam had started this process of cajoling (the early muslims to quit alcohol) since the very beginning.

The first verse relating to the prohibition of alcohol was revealed after Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ)'s migration to Madinah Munawwara in Surah Baqarah, verse number 219:-

يَسْـَٔلُوْنَكَ عَنِ الْخَمْرِ وَ الْمَيْسِرِ ؕ قُلْ فِيْهِمَاۤ اِثْمٌ كَبِيْرٌ وَّ مَنَافِعُ لِلنَّاسِ ۫ وَ اِثْمُهُمَاۤ اَكْبَرُ مِنْ نَّفْعِهِمَا ؕ (2:219)

They ask you about intoxicants and games of chance. Say: In both of them there is a great sin and means of profit for men, and their sin is greater than their profit.

After reading this ayah we can comprehend the following:-

1- Allah said, "They ask you about wine and gambling." to Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) because the Ansars, despite being accustomed to alcohol, used to ask him about Allah's decree on alcohol; primarily because they were deeply affected by the sound character of Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) and his companions who abstained from alcohol and also because they had realized the evil in alcohol. Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) and some of his companions practiced abstinence from alcohol, even in the Pre Islamic days.

2- The consumption, production, transportation and trading of alcohol is a grave sin as in this verse, Allah has said that the sin associated with alcohol is

more (greater) than the benefit gained from it. The benefit gained from alcohol is mundane i.e. "monetary benefit". This verse also teaches us that the Islamic ideology isn't based on the grounds of benefit or loss but is based on the will of Allah alone. If one ponders upon the reasons behind this state of affairs, one can easily comprehend that it is because of his inability to see {understand (know)} the hidden benefits and losses of an act or thing due to inadequate information and the limitations of his senses.

Man could not understand the prohibition of interest either. For centuries, man considered the prohibition of interest as a mere religious dogma that needed to be done away with. Only now has he started believing in this dogma, after witnessing not only people

but even countries being shackled in the chains of slavery due to interest.

Some Muslims continued to consume alcohol, even after the revelation of the verse mentioned above, because of their failure to understand the verse's true meaning. They were in a misunderstanding that Allah had only called intoxication a sinful act, not the consumption of alcohol, as He had used the word KHAMR (which means to cover or to conceal) in the verse. So, they were of the view that consumption of alcohol is a sin-free act as long as its consumption doesn't get them intoxicated because the brain is clouded or obscured only under the state of intoxication (drunkenness.)

Then, Allah commanded the Muslims to abstain from prayer under the state of intoxication in Surah Nisa verse number-43.

يَاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا لَا تَقْرَبُوا الصَّلٰوةَ وَ اَنْتُمْ سُكٰرٰى

(4:43)

O you who believe! Do not go near prayer when you are Intoxicated until you know (well) what you say.

This verse had a profound effect on the Muslims. Many more Muslims started to refrain from alcohol out of the fear that they might miss Salah, which is considered nifak (one of the greatest sins), if they got intoxicated. However, there were others who still continued to consume alcohol until the final verse regarding the prohibition of alcohol was revealed in Surah Al Maeda.

Now a question might arise in your mind that why wasn't the ban on alcohol imposed immediately?

You can find the answer by pondering upon the way/ sequence in which the Islamic laws were revealed. After pondering upon way/ sequence in which the Islamic laws were

revealed, you will realize that they were revealed gradually and in an ordered manner.

In a way/ sequence which made it easy for the early muslims to accept and obey them Aisha ﷺ opined that if all the Islamic laws weren't revealed gradually, it would have been difficult for the early muslims to accept and follow them; confining Islam to a few people.

That's why, Islam declared alcohol haram only when the muslims had become steadfast in their faith. This allowed them to accept and follow the Islamic teachings more easily. The final verse regarding the prohibition of alcohol was revealed in Surah Maeda, verse number 90 and 91.

يَاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْٓا اِنَّمَا الْخَمْرُ وَالْمَيْسِرُ وَ
الْاَنْصَابُ وَ الْاَزْلَامُ رِجْسٌ مِّنْ عَمَلِ الشَّيْطٰنِ
فَاجْتَنِبُوْهُ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُوْنَ۝۹۰ اِنَّمَا يُرِيْدُ

الشَّيْطٰنُ اَنْ يُّوْقِعَ بَيْنَكُمُ الْعَدَاوَةَ وَالْبَغْضَآءَ فِي الْخَمْرِ وَ الْمَيْسِرِ وَيَصُدَّكُمْ عَنْ ذِكْرِ اللّٰهِ وَ عَنِ الصَّلٰوةِ ۚ فَهَلْ اَنْتُمْ مُّنْتَهُوْنَ ۝٩١

(5:90,91)

O you who believe! Intoxicants and games of chance and (sacrificing to (stones set up and (dividing by) arrows are only an uncleanness, the Satan's work; shun it therefore that you may be successful. The Satan only desires to cause enmity and hatred to spring in your midst by means of intoxicants and games of chance, and to keep you off from the remembrance of Allah and from prayer. Will you then desist abstain)?

After the revelation of this verse, the Islamic society became completely free from alcohol (mother of all evils). The Muslim world is absiestent even today. This skewed

distribution of alcoholics in the world doesn't seize to amaze the western societies. When they try to find the reason behind this peculiar phenomenon, they come to a conclusion that it is solely because of the teachings of the Quran and Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ).

IRRATIONAL MISUNDERSTANDING.

Sadly, today even after reading all these verses, some Muslims doubt alcohol being Haram because the word haram isn't used for alcohol in the Quran. This peculiar phenomenon exits because of their failure to comprehend the true meaning of the verses regarding the prohibition of alcohol. I have listed the reasons why alcohol is Haram in the context of the Quran:-

1– In Surah Maeda, verse number 90and 91, Allah has classified alcoholism as a satanic act along with gambling, as it spreads hatred and enmity amongst

people. It even distances man from Allah as it hinders him from the remembrance of Allah and from praying. Allah has even mentioned alcohol with idolatry. This point in itself is sufficient to force a true believer to quit alcohol and to adopt the notion that alcohol is harm.

2. In Surah Maida verse number 91,Allah has clearly declared avoidance of alcohol as a way to salvation.

3. Another point which man must ponder upon is that in Surah Bakarah, verse number 219Allah has associated alcohol with a grave sin (اِثۡمٌ كَبِيۡرٌ).

يَسۡـَٔلُوۡنَكَ عَنِ الۡخَمۡرِ وَ الۡمَيۡسِرِ ؕ قُلۡ فِيۡهِمَاۤ اِثۡمٌ كَبِيۡرٌ (2:219)

They ask you about intoxicants and games of chance. Say: In both of them there is a great sin.

Then in Surah Al Araf, verse number 33 Allah has declared all sins(اِثۡمَ) haram.

قُلْ اِنَّمَا حَرَّمَ رَبِّيَ الْفَوَاحِشَ مَا ظَهَرَ مِنْهَا وَ مَا بَطَنَ وَ الْاِثْمَ(7:33)

Say (OH! Prophet ﷺ): My Lord has only prohibited indecencies, those of them that are apparent as well as those that are concealed", and sin...(اِثْمَ)"

Explanation:- In this verse Allah has clearly said that all sins are declared haram. One must not forget that haram denotes all acts or things which are prohibited.

When one will read both these verses in conjunction, he will come to a conclusion that alcohol is haram.

THE SAYINGS OF PROPHET MUHAMMAD (ﷺ) REGARDING ALCOHOL.

Even the sayings of Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) prove that alcohol is haram. I hope that these sayings will have a profound effect on an

alcoholic; forcing him to quit drinking as even in today's selfish world, our hearts are filled with respect and love for Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ).

Alcohol is declared haram because alcohol gives birth to and nurtures sins. That's why Sunan Al Nisai reports.

فَاجْتَنِبُوا الْخَمْرَ فانه والله! لا يجتمعُ والايمانُ ابداً الا يوشكُ احدهما اَنَ يُخْرِجُ

Avoid Khamr for, by Allah, it can never coexist with faith, but soon one of them will expel the other. (Hadith Number 5670, Chapter 44, Book of Drinks, Sunan Al Nisai)

In order to abolish alcoholism completely from the society, Islam has declared every act in connection to alcohol haram. Al Tirmidhi reports in Hadith Number 2776:

Narrated by Anas ibn Malik: Allah's Messenger ﷺ cursed ten people in connection

with wine: the wine-presser, the one who has it pressed, the one who drinks it, the one who conveys it, the one to whom it is conveyed, the one who serves it, the one who sells it, the one who benefits from the price paid for it, the one who buys it, and the one for whom it is bought.

As soon as the order regarding the prohibition of alcohol was revealed in Surah Maida, the noble Companions, obedient and responsive as they were, lost no time and took out all wine stored in their homes for personal or comercial use and poured it out on the streets then and there. This was demonstration of mind-boggling and virtually unrivalled obedience which was sparked by Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ)'s sublime character. This unprecedented obedience is one of Islam's greatest miracles. This incident proves that alcohol is haram because the sahabas wouldn't have poured all their wine on the streets if it wasn't haram.

CONDEMENATION OF ALCOHOL BY WESTERN BRAINS.

The disbelievers want to trap us muslims in the cobweb of alcohol, so that they can earn a fortune by selling alcohol in our markets just like they have been earning through interest. The notion that alcohol is the root to all evils is no pariah to the western society either as some of their most influential brains have shown concerns regarding the social effects of alcohol. Below are the views of some of the most notable European minds regarding alcohol:-

1. A renowned German doctor had guaranteed the closure of about half of the world's prisons and hospitals if about half of the world's pubs were closed.
2. Henry, a renowned French scholar, said that they had tried in vain to destroy the

muslims with alcohol, the same two edged sword which was also used to destroy the far east countries. He also said that they had experimented this lethal weapon on the Algerian people but weren't successful because of the strong faith of the Algerians in the Islamic shariah. He further added that if the Algerian people would have accepted their disguised weapon, they (the Algerians) would have been enslaved by them (western forces) just like an Algerian clan that had accepted alcohol was.

3. Hentam, a British law maker, wrote that the prohibition of alcohol is one of the merits of the Islamic Shariah. He further wrote that he had come to this conclusion after witnessing a peculiar change in the behavior of the African people after they had started the consumption of alcohol. Madness started to take toll in their

generations. He further added that he had observed the same madness within the people living in the European countries. So, he demanded a severe punishment for those who consume alcohol in Europe in order to avoid this madness.

Courtesy- Marif-Ul-Quran by Mufti Muhammad Shafi.

This proves that if one ponders upon the reality of alcohol impartially, he will come to a conclusion that "alcohol is man's greatest nemesis".

HEALTH EFFECT

Alcohol affects more than just behavior. Although the behavior resulting from alcohol consumption is the most noticeable side affect, the body is impacted in many other ways. Alcohol is a poison to the human body and affects virtually all of the body's system. The effects of alcohol on the body are:-

1. **Stomach:** Consumption of Liquor damages the top line of the oesophagus causing irritation. This results in loss of appetite, pain and difficulty in swallowing, peptic ulcers, inflammation and bleeding lesions. Due to lack of food and minute blood loss, the body's iron storages deplete causing irritability, lack of energy, headaches and dizziness. Irritation even induces vomiting.
2. **Pancreas:** The pancreas becomes stressed from having to create insulin to

process the sugar present in alcohol. This creates a significant risk of pancreatitis, a chronic inflammation that can be fatal.

3. **Liver:** Consumption of alcohol contributes to determinable changes in the liver, starting with the accumulation of fat because of its inability to process the carbohydrates, which are present in the food, as it is busy processing alcohol which is present in the blood. As a result, the body faces an acute shortage of vitamins that require fat to be absorbed into the body. These vitamins include vitamin A, D, E, K. Chronic heavy drinking may even cause alcoholic hepatitis (inflammation and destruction of liver cells) and then cirrhosis (irreversible lesions, scarring, and destruction of liver cells). Alcohol even impairs the liver's ability to remove yellow pigment, and skin appears yellow (jaundice).

4. **Small Intestine:** The intestinal glands secrete juices that help with digestion. The primary purpose of the small intestine is to convert partially digested food into energy. Most nutrients from digested food get absorbed from the intestines into the blood and then brought to the liver. Intestines are damaged by alcohol. This damage can lead to nutrient absorption difficulties. Many enzyme activities needed for proper functioning of the intestines can be disrupted by alcohol consumption. Muscle movements that help keep food in the small intestine for further digestion are slowed by alcohol resulting in heightened sensitivity to foods with high sugar contents and faster food movement through the intestines, resulting in diarrhea.

5. **Larger intestine-** The main purpose of the large intestine is to digest food

further (the food that enters the large intestine is partially digested) release nutrients into the bloodstream and absorb fluids. Alcohol consumption greatly reduces the frequency and strength of muscle contractions in the rectum. This, as in the small intestine, can speed movement of food through the intestines thus reducing absorption of nutrients and fluids and also cause diarrhea.

6. **Heart-** Since alcohol circulates through the blood stream, it has a detrimental effect on the heart as well. Gradually, layers of fat get deposited on the heart and it increases in size and weight. The heart beats of an alcoholic are faint or irregular.

The effects of alcohol aren't just constrained to the alcoholic himself but are passed to the future generations. According to a

research conducted by a German doctor, the effects of alcohol last for at least three future generations of the alcoholic; even tough these future generations may abstain from intoxicants.

Courtesy-Balahai-al-Ijtemai,

At last I would just like to remind you Allah's question to the Muslim Ummah.

فَهَلْ اَنْتُمْ مُّنْتَهُوْنَ (5:91)

WILL YOU THEN DESIST (ABSTAIN)???